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# Newsweek®

## Article's **Attack** on the **Bible**



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# Newsweek Article's Attack on the Bible: So Misinformed It's a Sin

Kyle Butt, M.A. &  
Dave Miller, Ph.D.

**A**BRAHAM Lincoln is credited with the statement: "How many legs does a dog have if you call its tail a leg? Four. Calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg." With that thought in mind, we turn our attention to the cover story of the December 23, 2014 issue of *Newsweek* titled, "The Bible: So Misunderstood It's a Sin." Kurt Eichenwald, the author, said concerning his article: "This examination is not an attack on the Bible or Christianity." He says about his writing, "None of this is meant to demean the Bible, but all of it is fact." Eichenwald may say that his article is not an attack on the Bible or is not designed to demean it, but that claim is simply not true. He boldly states that the Bible is "loaded with contradictions and translation errors and wasn't written by witnesses and includes words added by unknown scribes to inject Church orthodoxy." In fact, the bulk of his writing is an effort to prove these errors, contradictions, and discrepancies. Having declared that they are facts (which is the furthest thing from the truth, as we will show in this response), he says, "Christians angered by these facts should be angry with the Bible, not the messenger." Make no mistake about it, Eichenwald is bashing the Bible, and he does so without the facts.

In a way, Eichenwald's attack on the Bible is reassuring to the Bible believer for the simple reason that Eichenwald uses information that has been refuted literally for centuries. His article consists of warmed-over skepticism that

has so often been easily refuted; we at Apologetics Press already have articles on virtually every subject he mentions ([www.apologeticspress.org](http://www.apologeticspress.org)). In another way, however, his article is troubling. Why, if his arguments are so easily answered, does the author feel that they will resonate with his audience or cause others to question the Bible? The most reasonable answer seems to be that he knows his audience is ignorant of the responses to his attacks. The Proverbs writer once stated, "The first one to plead his cause seems right, until his neighbor comes and examines him" (Proverbs 18:17). To those who have not given these matters much thought, Eichenwald's information may seem legitimate and may cause one to doubt the Bible's inspiration. However, when one examines this information, it will be seen for what it is—a thinly veiled, inept attack against the inspired Word of God.

## THE "CONTRADICTIONS" IN THE BIBLE

### The Birth of Jesus

**O**NE of the clearest examples of Eichenwald's errant thinking is seen in his repetitious claim that the Bible is "loaded with contradictions." In his section titled "No Three Kings," he contends that the accounts of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke are contradictory. He writes: "Jesus was born in a house in Bethlehem. No wise men showed up for the birth.... No angel appearing to Mary.... Not born in a manger...." Then he asks the reader:

"Not the version you are familiar with...? You may not recognize this version, but it is a story of Jesus' birth found in the Gospels. Two Gospels—Matthew and Luke—tell the story of when Jesus was born, but in quite different ways. Contradictions abound."

Is it true that the versions of Jesus' "birth" are filled with contradictions? Not at all. Let us see how he proceeds to fabricate contradictions that are not there. First, notice how he begins his section: "Jesus was born in a house in Bethlehem." Note that he did not provide a verse reference for that claim—for good reason: there is no Bible passage that claims that Jesus was born in a house in Bethlehem. The account in Luke makes it clear that Jesus was born in Bethlehem (2:4) and, contrary to Eichenwald's charge, in a manger (2:7,16)—i.e., a barn-animal feeding trough. Did an angel appear to Mary? The Gospels make no such claim, and therefore, cannot be said to contradict one another. An angel appeared to shepherds in the field at the time of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:8-13) and to Mary before Jesus was conceived (Luke 1:26-31), but this does not contradict any other passage. Did wise men come to the birth? When we turn to Matthew's account, the chapter begins its narrative about the wise men: "Now **after** Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King..." (2:1). How long **after** Jesus was born in Bethlehem? The text does not say. In fact, king Herod asked the wise men what time Jesus' star appeared (vs. 7), and based on that information, the evil king issued a decree to kill the young males in Bethlehem who were from "two years old and under" (vs. 16). Obviously, between the time the star appeared, and the time the wise men arrived, several months had elapsed. In fact, from Herod's calculations to kill two year olds, it could have been as much as 18 months to two years. So, the story in Matthew 2 is not even a "birth" story. The Bible makes no claim that wise men were at Jesus' birth. The only contradiction that can be levied concerning the appearance of the wise men is not a contradiction in the Bible,

but a contradiction between what the Bible says and what people have erroneously **claimed** the Bible says—as with the case of the appearance of the angel to Mary.

Eichenwald has committed the very mistake that he accuses so many evangelicals of committing. Early in the article he bemoans the fact that many people who call themselves Christians do not even know what the text says. Sadly, he is right. Many Christians do not study the Bible as they should. He insists that his article is “designed to shine a light on a book that has been abused by people who claim to revere it but don’t read it.” Ironically, Eichenwald’s attack is filled with heat, but very little light. His examples of obvious “contradictions” in the “birth” accounts of Jesus are attacks against information that is not even in the Bible. In an article that purports to straighten out those who are biblically illiterate, to boldly proclaim that the Bible states that “Jesus was born in a house in Bethlehem”—when the Bible nowhere makes such a statement—is inexcusable, slipshod scholarship. [For more information, see the A.P. article: “When Did Jesus Go to Egypt?” (Lyons, 2011).]

In addition, Eichenwald claims that the genealogies in Matthew and Luke trace Jesus’ bloodline through Joseph, “Except...Joseph wasn’t Jesus’ father.... Mary, the mother of Jesus, can be the only parent with a bloodline to David, but neither Gospel makes mention of that.” This allegation has been decisively answered in the A.P. article titled, “The Genealogies of Matthew and Luke.” Here is the short answer to this alleged discrepancy:

Here is the precise purpose of Matthew’s genealogy: it demonstrated Jesus’ **legal** right to inherit the throne of David—a necessary prerequisite to authenticating His Messianic claim. However, an equally critical credential was His **blood**/physical descent from David—a point that could not be established through Joseph since “after His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child **of the Holy**

**Spirit**” (Matthew 1:18, emp. added). This feature of Christ’s Messiahship was established through His mother Mary, who was also a blood descendant of David (Luke 1:30-32). Both the blood of David and the throne of David were necessary variables to qualify and authenticate Jesus as the Messiah (Miller, 2003, emp. in orig.).

Isn’t it interesting that Eichenwald left out the fact that Luke’s genealogy mentions Jesus “being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph” (Luke 3:24)? By using the phrase “as was supposed,” Luke demonstrates that Jesus was not the **actual** son of Joseph, just the perceived one. In addition, the *Newsweek* author neglected to mention that in Matthew 1:16, when the text says that “Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary, **of whom** was born Jesus,” the word “whom” (in the Greek) is in the feminine form. It could only be referring to Mary. Thus, **neither** of the genealogies states that Jesus was born to Joseph.

#### Alleged Contradictions in the Resurrection Accounts

Eichenwald continues his attack on the Bible, stating that the “stories in the four Gospels of Jesus’ death and resurrection differ as well.” He asserts: “And who went to anoint Jesus in his tomb? In Matthew, it was Mary and another woman named Mary, and an

angel met them there. In Mark, it was Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, and a young man met them. In John, it was Mary alone; no one met her.” Supposedly, these “differing” accounts are so blatantly contradictory that no further examination need be applied to them. When we apply proper reasoning to this allegation, however, we see there are no contradictions.

For instance, what if John mentions one Mary while Matthew mentions Mary and another woman named Mary? This difference is not a contradiction. John would have had to qualify his statement by saying that “only” Mary or Mary “alone” went to the tomb. Did you notice that Eichenwald includes the word “alone” with Mary, but the biblical text **never** does? Just because one writer gives additional or supplemental information does not make him contradict the other account. [For more information, see the A.P. article titled, “The Resurrection Narratives” (Butt, 2002).] Consider Eichenwald’s own statement that at the Council of Nicaea, “Constantine arrived wearing jewels and gold on his scarlet robe and pearls on his crown.” Suppose that another person were to say that Constantine arrived with numerous courtiers and was wearing boots. Would

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that statement be a contradiction? Not in any way. Such accusations barely deserve to be answered—if it were not for their prevalence.

### Two Accounts of Creation?

Eichenwald further suggests that “biblical scholars have concluded that two Jewish sects wrote many of the books. Each prepared its version of the Old Testament, and the two were joined together without any attempt to reconcile the many contradictions” (2014). Once again, the *Newsweek* writer conveniently mentions only those “biblical scholars” who happen to agree with him. What about the thousands of scholars that do not agree with this specious position? As an example of these “doublets,” he states: “The next time someone tells you the biblical story of Creation is true, ask that person, ‘Which one?’ Few of the Christian faithful seem to know the Bible contains multiple creation stories.... Careful readers have long known that the two stories contradict each other.” In truth, careful readers have long known just the opposite. As Wayne Jackson concluded: “When the texts of Genesis 1 and 2 have been considered carefully, one thing is clear: an objective evaluation reveals no discrepancies, nor is a dual authorship to be inferred. Devout students of the Bible should not be disturbed by the fanciful, ever-changing theories of the liberal critics” (See the A.P. article, “Are There Two Creation Accounts in Genesis?” [Jackson, 1991; Cf. McGarvey, 1910, p. 66]). [NOTE: In his section dealing with such doublets, Eichenwald mentions that “biblical scholars” have concluded that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. The evidence, however, reveals that Moses certainly did write these books. See the A.P. article “Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch—Tried and True” (Lyons, 2003; cf. McGarvey, 1902).]

The article also uses the Flood story as an example of doublets causing contradictions. Eichenwald says the “water flooded the earth for 40 days (Genesis 7:17), or 150 days (Genesis 7:24).” His careless use of the Scripture is painful to endure. The text does not say in

Genesis 7:17 that the Flood stopped after 40 days. It simply details things that occurred at that time, such as the waters lifting the ark off the ground. The text in Genesis 7:24 specifically says that at the end of 150 days the water began to decrease. The previous 7:17 says nothing about the complete duration of the Flood or when the waters stopped rising. [NOTE: For an exhaustive list of answers to these types of alleged contradictions, see A.P.’s Web site category titled “Alleged Discrepancies.”]

### SUNDAY AS THE CHRISTIAN DAY OF WORSHIP

THE title of the *Newsweek* article, “The Bible: So Misunderstood It’s a Sin,” explains much about the author’s method of bashing. He approaches the subject in light of the idea that many Christians do not read or understand the Bible. One of the author’s grievous faults, however, is that it is apparent that he does not read or understand the Bible either, and he writes in a way that betrays this fact. For instance, when discussing the Christian day of worship, Eichenwald suggests that Constantine was responsible for establishing it as Sunday instead of the Sabbath (or Saturday). He alleges:

Things that are today accepted without much thought were adopted or reinforced at Nicaea. For example, the Old Testament was clear in declaring that God rested on the seventh day, making it the Sabbath. The seventh day of the week is Saturday, the day of Jewish worship and rest. (Jesus himself invoked the holiness of the Jewish Sabbath.) The word Sunday does not appear in the Bible, either as the Sabbath or anything else. But four years before Nicaea, Constantine declared Sunday as a day of rest in honor of the sun God.... Many theologians and Christian historians believe that it was at this moment, to satisfy Constantine and his commitment to his empire’s many sun worshippers, that the Holy Sabbath was moved by one day, contradicting the clear words of what ultimately became the Bible (2014).

Notice the author’s tactic. First, he says that both the Old Testament and Jesus invoked the Sabbath (our Saturday) as holy. Then he states that the Bible never even uses the word Sunday. And, lastly, he implies that Christians were not “officially” worshipping on this day prior to Constantine, but that Constantine **changed** the day of Christian worship to Sunday.

Eichenwald’s assertions regarding the day of Christian worship contradict both biblical and historical fact—and are easily answered. First, he confuses the issue when he says that the word “Sunday” is not even used in the Bible, since none of our modern names for the days of the week are used in the Bible. The term “Saturday” does not appear. You will not read the terms “Friday” or “Monday” in the original text either. Such is to be expected. The real question is: did the writers of the Bible have their own designation for the day that we call Sunday? Of course they did; it was called “the first day of the week,” Saturday (or Sabbath), being the last or seventh day of their week. We could ask, then, do we read about anything in the New Testament happening on the first day of the week? Absolutely. In fact, Jesus rose early “after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn” (Matthew 28:1). Christians were to come together to give money to support the church’s work every “first day of the week” in the city of Corinth (1 Corinthians 16:2). And the book of Acts explains that the Christians gathered to partake of the Lord’s Supper (referred to as “breaking bread”) on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

Early Christian writers that lived in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries verify this truth. As Eric Lyons wrote in the A.P. article titled “Did Paul Want Christians to Come Together on Saturday or Sunday?”:

Ignatius wrote in his letter to the Magnesians (believed to be penned around A.D. 110) how Christians “have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of **the Lord’s Day**” (1:62, emp. added; cf. Revelation 1:5). And, in chapter 67

of his *First Apology* (written around A.D. 150), Justin Martyr noted how Christians would gather together “on the day called **Sunday**” to read the writings of the apostles and prophets, instruct, pray, give, and eat of bread and wine (2005; see also the A.P. article, “The First Day of the Week” [Lyons, 2006]).

Biblical scholar Robert Milligan wrote, “That the primitive Christians were wont to celebrate the Lord’s Supper on every first day of the week is evident.... During the first two centuries the practice of weekly communion was universal, and it was continued in the Greek church till the seventh century” (1975, p. 440).

In addition to these facts, Eichenwald seems to be totally unaware of the overwhelming testimony of the New Testament that the Old Testament has been fulfilled and removed. Yes, the Old Testament mandated worship on the Sabbath—for the Jews; but Christ’s death and resurrection changed the law. As the Hebrews writer so concisely observed, “In that He says, ‘A new covenant,’ He has made the first obsolete” (8:13). And again Paul wrote that the Old Law, “was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Galatians 3:25). Christians no longer sacrifice animals as the Israelites did, they no longer celebrate the Passover, and they no longer hallow Saturday as the Holy Day. Those are vestiges of the Old Law that have been removed. For Eichenwald to misunderstand such clear and repetitive New Testament teaching is disappointing to say the least. The testimony of the New Testament and early Christian writers proves that **Sunday was the Christian day of worship centuries before Constantine arrived on the scene.**

## JESUS AND FAMILY VALUES

**I**n the first paragraph of his article, Eichenwald caricatures certain “Christian” fanatics and caustically attacks them, demanding that “they are God’s fraud’s, cafeteria Christians who pick and choose which Bible verses they

heed with less care than they exercise in selecting side orders for lunch.” As we have seen throughout this review, Eichenwald is often guilty of the very tactics he condemns others for using. As an example, consider his statements concerning Jesus and family values. He wrote:

Some of the contradictions are conflicts between what evangelicals consider absolute and what Jesus actually said. For example, evangelicals are always talking about family values. But to Jesus, family was an impediment to reaching God. In the Gospel of Matthew, he states, “And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life” (2014).

Talk about cafeteria style Bible interpretation! Eichenwald conveniently fails to include the fact that one of Jesus’ dying statements was to ensure that His mother was taken care of after His death (John 19:26-27). He leaves out the fact that Jesus’ apostles insisted that husbands are called to love their wives and give their very lives to protect them (Ephesians 5:25). In addition, children are to honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1), fathers are to train and discipline their children (Ephesians 6:4; Hebrews 12:7-11), families are to financially support their own (1 Timothy 5:8), and wives are to love their husbands and their children (Titus 2:4). In addition, Jesus insisted that God is like a loving Father who longs for the return of His children (Luke 15:11-32). It is only possible to question Jesus’ and the apostles’ family values if a handful of verses are ripped from their context.

What is Jesus really saying when He mentions that His followers are to “forsake” families or homes for His cause? The easy-to-understand message here is that a relationship with Jesus must be the most important relationship in the life of His followers. That means if a spouse were to demand that a Christian participate in pagan idol worship or the spouse was going to leave, then with much sadness but firm resolve, the Christian should let

the spouse leave and not join in the pagan idol worship. If Hindu parents insist that if their college son becomes a Christian they will disown him, that son should follow Christ and be disowned by his parents. We can all understand that a person should never commit murder, theft, or adultery to preserve a close relationship with family or friends. Jesus was merely stating that the relationship with Him is the most important. [See the A.P. article “Hate Your Parents—or Love Them?” Butt, 2004).]

## HAS THE BIBLE BEEN CORRUPTED?

**O**NE of the longest sections of the *Newsweek* article deals with the idea that the Bible has been corrupted over time, that we do not really know which books belong in the Bible, and that translation errors are so plentiful that we do not have the original message. Yet these allegations have been confronted and refuted time and time again. [Cf. A.P.’s soon-to-be released video series titled, “Has the Bible Been Corrupted?” in which such assertions are debunked.] Many books over the years have masterfully answered the skeptic in this regard, including such volumes as J.W. McGarvey’s *Evidences of Christianity*, F.F. Bruce’s *The Canon of Scripture*, Bruce Metzger’s *The Text of the New Testament*, and a host of others. The *Newsweek* article manifests abysmal, inexcusable ignorance of the long established facts of the matter.

For example, Eichenwald states that we do not have the original message of the Bible because the originals are lost and the translations are filled with errors and variations. He claims that

no television preacher has ever read the Bible. Neither has any evangelical politician. Neither has the pope. Neither have I. And neither have you. At best, we’ve all read a bad translation—a translation of translations of translations of hand-copied copies of copies of copies of copies, and on and on, hundreds of times (2014).

Supposedly, according to Eichenwald, since we don’t have the originals, and our translations are from copies that



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were written in other languages, there is no way we have actually read the Bible.

This naïve, uninformed view of message transmission cannot be maintained in light of the evidence. Are we to believe that since we have never seen Eichenwald's original article that he personally typed or penned, then we cannot have the information he intended to present? Is it true that since some people read the article on-line, but others in printed form, then the original message is hopelessly lost? Is it true that anyone who reads the article in a language other than English has never really read the article, since it would be a translation? What Eichenwald and other skeptics are attempting to do is suggest that it is impossible to pass information accurately from one language to another, or from one printed page to another; but that suggestion is simply not true. If it is possible for a person to copy accurately a message once, it is possible to do so twice, and so on.

When we approach the Bible, we must simply ask, "Do we have the message that the original authors penned?" When we explore that question, we discover that the books of the New Testament are the most extensively verified books of ancient history. If we deny the Bible is verified, then we are saying that it is impossible for any information to be conveyed accurately from the past to the present. The skeptics' attack is not against the Bible, per se; it is against the idea that we can know anything from ancient history. If it is possible to know what any writer has ever penned, then the skeptic's accusations against the Bible cannot be sustained. When Eichenwald states, "And what biblical scholars now know is that later versions of the books differ significantly from earlier ones," he implies there are so many variations in the manuscripts that the original message has been lost. This misleading exaggeration is a typical ploy by those who wish to discredit the integrity of the text of the Bible. What's more, when he states, "Scribes added whole sections of the New Testament, and removed words and sentences that contradicted emerging orthodox beliefs," he unwittingly admits that scholars

have been able to identify and isolate those very words and sentences! In actuality, those manuscripts wherein scribes manifested doctrinal bias are in the small minority, do not represent the mass of manuscripts, and are identifiable.

Due to length constraints, a detailed analysis of textual variants is beyond the scope of this article. However, the sincere inquirer may easily access the analyses that have been made on each passage. For example, for a thorough discussion of **the last 12 verses of Mark**, see Miller, 2005; Scrivener, 1861, pp. 429ff; et al. For a discussion of the manuscript support pertaining to the woman taken in adultery (**John 7:53-8:11**), see Scrivener, pp. 439-443; Woods, 1989, p. 162; McGarvey, 1974, p. 16; Metzger, 1971, pp. 219-222; Jackson, 2011, p. 161; et al. For **1 John 5:7**, see Woods, 1962, pp. 324-326; Metzger, 1971, pp. 716-718. For **Luke 22:17-20**, see Metzger, 1971, pp. 173-177. Any standard text on textual criticism discusses these and many other variants (e.g., Aland and Aland, 1987). If the reader desires the truth regarding the authenticity and integrity of the Bible, **the evidence is available**—if the individual is willing to spend the time and effort to weigh that evidence and arrive at the proper conclusion (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1).

What Eichenwald fails to divulge are several facts that completely undermine and discredit his attack on the integrity and transmission of the Bible:

1. God knew that the original autographs would not survive, and that His Word would have to be transmitted through the centuries via copies. **The transmission process is sufficiently flexible for God's Word to be conveyed adequately by uninspired, imperfect copyists.**
2. We know how the original New Testament books read because **we have three surviving classes of evidence by which to reconstruct the original New Testament:** Greek manuscripts, ancient versions, and patristic citations.
3. The current number of Greek manuscript copies containing all or part of

the New Testament now stands at 5,795. This amount of manuscript evidence for the text of the New Testament is **far greater than that available for any ancient classical author.**

4. The time between the writing of the original books of the New Testament and the earliest surviving copies is **relatively brief.**
5. Although no two manuscript copies agree in every detail, the degree of accuracy achieved by most scribes was **remarkably high.** The vast majority of textual variants involve **minor** matters that do not alter any basic teaching of the New Testament. **No feature of Christian doctrine is at stake.**
6. Suitable solutions to these differences are detectable. Even if they weren't, **the original reading is one of the extant options.** And even those variants that some might deem "doctrinally significant" pertain to matters that are treated elsewhere in the Bible where the question of genuineness/certainty is unquestioned.
7. We can confidently affirm that we have 999/1000<sup>ths</sup> of the original New Testament intact. The remaining 1/1000<sup>th</sup> pertains to inconsequential details.

These observations have been verified by the greatest textual critics and linguistic scholars of the past two centuries. Their conclusions have not become outdated, but remain as valid today as when first formulated. If the integrity of the text of the Bible was fully authenticated in their day, **it remains so today.** Consider the following statements by some of these world class authorities.

## SCHOLARLY VERIFICATION OF THE PURITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TEXT

**F.F. Bruce** (1910-1990) was a biblical scholar who taught Greek at the University of Edinburgh and the University of Leeds, chaired the Department of Biblical History and Literature at the University of Sheffield, received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Aberdeen University, and served as the Rylands Professor of Biblical



Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester. He wrote over 40 books and served as Editor of *The Evangelical Quarterly* and *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*. Bruce declared: "The variant readings about which any doubt remains among textual critics of the N.T. **affect no material question of historic fact or of Christian faith and practice**" (1975, pp. 19-20, emp. added). As if anticipating the *Newsweek* article, he also stated:

In view of the inevitable accumulation of such errors over so many centuries, it may be thought that the original texts of the New Testament documents have been corrupted beyond restoration. Some writers, indeed, insist on the likelihood of this to such a degree that one sometimes suspects they would be glad if it were so. **But they are mistaken.** There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament (1963, p. 178, emp. added). Bruce further insisted:

Something more ought to be said, and said with emphasis. We have been discussing various textual types, and reviewing their comparative claims to be regarded as best representatives of the original New Testament. **But there are not wide divergencies between these types, of a kind that could make any difference to the Church's responsibility to be a witness and guardian of Holy Writ....** If the variant readings are so numerous, it is because the witnesses are so numerous. But all the witnesses, and all the types which they represent, **agree on every article of Christian belief and practice** (1963, p. 189, emp. added).

**Bruce Metzger** (1914-2007) was also a scholar of Greek, the New Testament, and New Testament Textual Criticism, serving as professor at Princeton Theological Seminary for 46 years. He was a recognized authority on the Greek text of the New Testament. He served on the board of the American Bible Society, was the driving force of the United Bible Societies' series of Greek Texts, and served as Chairperson of the NRSV Bible Committee. He is widely considered one of the most influential

New Testament scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Metzger stated:

...even if we had no Greek manuscripts today, by piecing together the information from these translations from a relatively early date, we could actually reproduce the contents of the New Testament. In addition to that, even if we lost all the Greek manuscripts and the early translations, we could still reproduce the contents of the New Testament from the multiplicity of quotations in commentaries, sermons, letters, and so forth of the early church fathers (as quoted in Strobel, 1998, p. 59).

**Brooke Foss Westcott** (1825-1901) was a British bishop, biblical scholar and theologian, serving as Bishop of Durham and holding the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Cambridge. His colleague, **Fenton John Anthony Hort** (1828-1892), was an Irish theologian who served as a Professor at Cambridge. Together, they pioneered the widely recognized Greek text *The New Testament in the Original Greek* in 1881. They are still considered to be renowned textual critics. They forthrightly asserted:

With regard to the great bulk of the words of the New Testament...there is no variation or other ground of doubt.... [T]he amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and **can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text.** Since there is reason to suspect that an exaggerated impression prevails as to the extent of possible textual corruption in the New Testament...**we desire to make it clearly understood beforehand how much of the New Testament stands in no need of a textual critic's labours** (1882, pp. 2-3, emp. added).

These peerless scholars also insisted: "[I]n the variety and fullness of the evidence on which it rests **the text of the New Testament stands absolutely and unapproachably alone** among ancient prose writing" (p. 278, emp. added). They add: "The books of the New Testament as preserved in extant documents assuredly speak to us in every important respect in language identical with that in which they spoke

to those for whom they were originally written" (p. 284).

**Benjamin Warfield** (1851-1921) was a Professor of Theology at Princeton Seminary from 1887 to 1921. He is considered to be the last of the great Princeton theologians. In his *Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, Warfield insightfully observed:

[S]uch has been the providence of God in preserving for His Church in each and every age **a competently exact text of the Scriptures**, that not only is the New Testament unrivalled among ancient writings in **the purity of its text** as actually transmitted and kept in use, but also in the abundance of testimony which has come down to us for castigating its **comparatively infrequent blemishes....** The great mass of the New Testament, in other words, has been transmitted to us with **no, or next to no, variation** (1886, pp. 12-13, 14, emp. added).

**Richard Bentley** (1662-1742) was an English classical scholar, critic, and theologian who served as Master of Trinity College, Cambridge and was the first Englishman to be ranked with the great heroes of classical learning. He was well-known for his literary and textual criticism, even called the "Founder of Historical Philology," and credited with the creation of the English school of Hellenism. Here are his comments on the integrity of the New Testament text:

[T]he real text of the sacred writers does not now (since the originals have been so long lost) lie in any single manuscript or edition, but is dispersed in them all. **'Tis competently exact indeed even in the worst manuscript now extant; nor is one article of faith or moral precept either perverted or lost in them** (1725, pp. 68-69, emp. added).

**Sir Frederic George Kenyon** (1863-1952) was a widely respected, eminent British paleographer and biblical and classical scholar who occupied a series of posts at the British Museum. He served as President of the British Academy from 1917 to 1921 and President of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. He made a lifelong study of



the Bible as an historical text. In his masterful *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts*, Kenyon affirmed:

One word of warning...must be emphasized in conclusion. **No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading.** Constant references to mistakes and divergencies of reading...might give rise to the doubt whether the substance, as well as the language, of the Bible is not open to question. **It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain.** Especially is this the case with the New Testament. The number of manuscripts of the New Testament, of early translations from it, and of quotations from it in the oldest writers of the Church is so large, that it is practically certain that **the true reading of every doubtful passage is preserved in some one or other of these ancient authorities.** This can be said of no other ancient book in the world (1895, pp. 10-11, emp. added).

In his monumental *The Bible and Archaeology*, Kenyon further stated:

The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that **the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written** has now been removed. **Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established** (1940, pp. 288-289, emp. added).

Indeed, “the Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear of hesitation that he holds in it the true Word of God, faithfully handed down from generation to generation throughout the centuries” (1895, pp. 10-11).

**Samuel Davidson** (1806-1898) was an Irish biblical scholar who served as Professor of Biblical Criticism at Royal College of Belfast and Professor of Biblical Criticism in the Lancashire Independent College at Manchester. He authored many books on the text of the Bible. Referring to the work of textual criticism, Davidson concluded:

The effect of it has been to **establish the genuineness of the New Testament text** in all important particulars. No new doctrines have been elicited by its aid; nor have any historical facts been summoned by it from their obscurity. **All the doctrines and duties of Christianity remain unaffected....** [I]n the records of inspiration there is no material corruption.... [D]uring the lapse of many centuries **the text of Scripture has been preserved** with great care.... Empowered by the fruits of criticism, we may well say that **the Scriptures continue essentially the same as when they proceeded from the writers themselves** (1853, 2:147, emp. added).

**Frederick H.A. Scrivener** (1813-1891) was a prominent and important New Testament textual critic of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Having graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge, he taught classics at several schools in southern England. His expertise in textual criticism is self-evident in that he served as a member of the English New Testament Revision Committee (Revised Version), edited the Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis and several editions of the Greek New Testament, collated the Codex Sinaiticus with the *Textus Receptus*, and was the first to distinguish the *Textus Receptus* from the Byzantine text. In his *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, Scrivener admitted:

[O]ne great truth is admitted on all hands—the almost complete freedom of Holy Scripture from the bare suspicion of wilful corruption; the absolute identity of the testimony of every known copy in respect to doctrine, and spirit, and the main drift of every argument and every narrative through the entire volume of Inspiration.... **Thus hath God’s Providence kept from harm the treasure of His written word**, so far as is needful for the quiet assurance of His church and people (1861, pp. 6-7, emp. added).

**J.W. McGarvey** (1829-1911) was a minister, author, educator, and biblical scholar. He taught 46 years in the College of the Bible in Lexington, Kentucky, serving as President from 1895 to 1911. He summarized the point: “All the authority and value

possessed by these books when they were first written belong to them still” (1974, p. 17).

**Elias Boudinot** (1740-1821) was a prominent Founding Father of America. He served in the Continental Congress (1778-1779, 1781-1784), as its President in 1782-1783, and was the founding president of the American Bible Society. In his refutation of Thomas Paine’s *Age of Reason*, Boudinot explained: “[T]he facts upon which the Christian religion is founded, have a stronger proof, than any facts at such a distance of time; and that the books which convey them down to us, **may be proved to be uncorrupted and authentic**, with greater strength than any other writings of equal antiquity” (1801, p. 239, emp. added). This Founding Father’s view of the purity of the text of the New Testament was the view of the vast majority of the Founders.

With all the kindness one can muster, these imminent, well-studied, competent, peerless scholars, whose expertise in the field of Textual Criticism is unsurpassed, are far more qualified and accurate in their assessment of the credibility, integrity, and authenticity of the biblical text than the author of the *Newsweek* article.

## CONCLUSION

**H**ERE is the deeply disturbing predicament of our day:

- » Outstanding scholarship of bygone days fully demonstrated the authenticity and integrity of the text of the Bible, forcefully refuting the skeptics to the extent that the skeptics gained little traction in western civilization. The textual evidence that has come to light in recent decades has added even more weight to the arguments for biblical integrity.
- » But in recent years, such honest biblical scholarship has been succeeded by those who do not possess the same burning desire to seek the truth, but instead want to maintain their own infidelic agenda.
- » These biased unbelievers have the brazen effrontery to foist false information upon their unsuspecting victims who are completely unaware of the facts and ill-equipped to handle the onslaught.
- » Due to the propaganda to which the average citizen has been subjected (in an



education system that long ago abandoned the pursuit of the truth)—professors and magazine writers know they will go largely unchallenged by the bulk of society.

Indeed, it is unfortunate that such articles as Eichenwald's even need answering. There was a time when this type of anemic propaganda against the Bible would have immediately been dismissed for the slanted, biased, foolishness that it is. If Christians will arm themselves with the evidence, and "always be ready to give a defense" to those who are attacking the Truth, God may grant that we see those times again.

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## SPEAKING SCHEDULES

### Kyle Butt

February 2	Henderson, TN	(731) 989-6000
February 27-28	Pigeon Forge, TN	(256) 710-7671

### Eric Lyons

February 4	Henderson, TN	(731) 989-6000
February 5-8	San Marcos, TX	(512) 353-2487
February 15	Wetumpka, AL	(334) 567-6561

### Dave Miller

February 1	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
February 4	Henderson, TN	(731) 989-6000
February 9-11	Fayette, AL	(334) 264-2985

### Jeff Miller

Feb. 12, 19, 26	Montgomery, AL	(334) 272-8558
Feb. 28-Mar. 1	Waterford, MI	(248) 674-1553

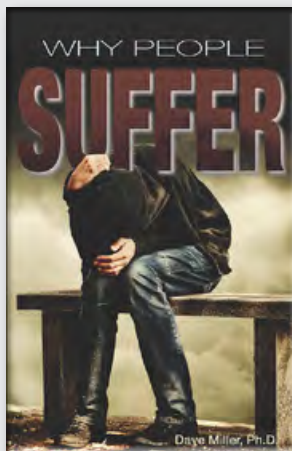




## NOTE FROM

*The Editor*

## New Book on Suffering and 2014 A.P. Web Stats



skeptics and atheists who insist that suffering in the world **proves** that God does not exist are simply wrong. Why? Because the Bible provides the only suitable explanation(s) for why people suffer.

In that vein, we are pleased to release a new book titled *Why People Suffer*. This volume was written with the average reader in mind (rather than addressed to intellectuals and philosophers). It uses a casual mode of expression and is designed to help the average person to sort out the confusion and concern that naturally arises when faced

Perhaps the number one reason why people reject God is they cannot see how a loving God would allow so much suffering in the world. Facing calamity, heartache, and tribulation are prominent factors in causing many people to reconsider personal belief in God. However,

with hardship and pain in life. The Bible does, indeed, provide satisfactory explanations for the existence of suffering and calamity in the world. The volume contains thought questions at the end of each section suitable for classroom study. And it is priced to enable churches to provide copies for all their students.

On another note, we are also excited to announce another milestone in A.P.'s efforts to impact the world. Last year, our Web site surpassed the **19.4 million mark** in terms of "pages viewed." That means that over 19 million pages of information from the A.P. Web site were viewed in 2014 by people located in over 230 countries/territories worldwide. We are truly delighted that the Lord is seeing fit to use the A.P. site to do a significant amount of evangelism. If you've not visited our site recently, please do so. New articles, video, audio, books, etc. are constantly being added.

Dave Miller

See the Center Spread  
for More Details